

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims

CLAIMS

1. (original) In a video decoder system for receiving program guide information from a first source, a method for forming a composite program guide for program content available from a plurality of sources, comprising the steps of:
- a) retrieving access data from memory;
 - b) initiating communication automatically between said decoder and a second source external to said video decoder using said access data; said communication being initiated by said decoder independently of a user command associated with a program or service selection;
 - c) retrieving program guide information from said second source;
- and
- d) incorporating said program guide information provided by said first and second sources into a program guide for display.
2. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein, in step (b) said communication is initiated on a repetitive basis in response to preprogrammed instructions of a processor.
3. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein, in step (b) said communication is initiated in response on a repetitive basis in response to preprogrammed instructions of a processor.
4. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein, in step (b) said communication is initiated in response to at least one of: a) power-up of said decoder, and b) power-up of an attached peripheral device.

5. (original) A method according to claim 1 further including the step of
detecting a change in number or type of peripheral devices connected to said decoder.

6. (original) A method according to claim 5 wherein in step (b) said communication is initiated in response to said change.

7. (original) A method according to claim 5 wherein said step of initiating communication is performed on a repetitive basis in response to preprogrammed processor instruction for said detecting of said change.

8. (original) A method according to claim 5 wherein said change is detected in response to configuration data identifying a peripheral device attached to said decoder and provided from one of: a) User data entry, and b) said received program guide information.

9. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said step of initiating communication is performed in response to pre-stored configuration data identifying a peripheral device attached to said decoder.

10. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said first source is one of a) a satellite broadcast source, b) a terrestrial broadcast source, and c) a cable broadcast source, and said second source is one of a) a storage source, b) an Internet source, c) a computer network source, and d) a source accessible via telephone lines.

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11. (original) In a video decoder system for receiving program guide information from a first source, a method for forming a program guide for program content available from a plurality of sources, comprising the steps of:

- a) retrieving access data from memory;
 - b) automatically identifying a peripheral device attached to said decoder, said identification being initiated by said decoder independently of a user command associated with a program or service selection;
 - c) initiating communication between said decoder and said peripheral device attached to said decoder using a communication protocol determined from said access data;
 - d) retrieving program guide information from said peripheral device;
- and
- e) incorporating said program guide information provided by said first source and peripheral device into a program guide for display.

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12. (original) A method according to claim 11 wherein, in step (b) said peripheral device is identified from configuration information derived from one of: a) pre-stored data in internal memory of said decoder, b) data entered by a User, and c) said program guide information received from said first source.

13. (original) A method according to claim 11 further including the step of
polling via a decoder communication link to determine whether said peripheral device is attached to said decoder link.

14. (original) A method according to claim 11 further including the step of
identifying a change in number or type of peripheral devices connected to said decoder.

15. (original) A method according to claim 14 wherein in step (c) said communication is initiated in response to said change.

16. (original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said peripheral device is one of a) a storage device, b) a device accessed via the Internet, c) a satellite, terrestrial or cable broadcasting device, d) a device accessible via a computer network and e) a device accessible via telephone lines.

17. (currently amended) In a video decoder system for receiving program guide information from a first source, a method for forming a program guide for program content available from a plurality of sources, comprising the steps of:

a) retrieving access data from memory, wherein said access data comprises request access data;

b) automatically initiating communication between said decoder and a peripheral device attached to said decoder in response to at least one of the following conditions: i) power-up of said decoder, ii) power-up of said attached peripheral device, iii) repetitive pre-programmed command from a decoder processor, iv) change in number of attached peripheral devices, and v) change in type of attached peripheral devices;

c) retrieving program guide information from said peripheral device; and

d) incorporating said program guide information provided by said first source and peripheral device into a program guide for display, wherein said first source is accessed via the Internet using said request access data.

18. (currently amended) A method according to claim 17 wherein said request access data comprises a uniform resource locator, in step (b)
~~_____ said communication is initiated using a communication protocol determined from said access data.~~

19. (new claim) A method according to claim 1, wherein said access data comprises request access data used for requesting EPG data from said second source and conditional access data for authorizing access to said second source.

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20. (new claim) A method according to claim 11, wherein said access data comprises request access data used for requesting EPG data from said peripheral device and conditional access data for authorizing access to said peripheral device.
